



U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service

News Release

Pacific Islands External Affairs Office

300 Ala Moana Blvd., Room 3-511 Box 50187, Honolulu, HI 96850
Phone: 808 792-9530 Fax: 808 792-9583

For Release: January 6, 2006
Contact: Ken Foote, 808 792 9535 or 282 9442

PIEA-06-01

Fish and Wildlife Service Gives \$600,000 Coastal Grant to Restore Oahu's Kawainui Marsh

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service will award \$646,250 in a grant to the state of Hawaii to restore and enhance Kawainui Marsh on the island of Oahu. The marsh was recognized in February 2005 as an internationally significant wetland under The Convention on Wetlands of International Importance, more commonly known as the Ramsar Convention after its place of adoption in Iran in 1971. The grant is part of \$15 million in Coastal Wetlands Conservation grants to 12 states, announced today by Interior Secretary Gale Norton.

The Hawaii grant will be supplemented by \$312,500 from the state and private partners. The total project cost of \$958,750 will enable Hawaii's Department of Land and Natural Resources and their partners to restore 20 acres and enhance 60 acres of coastal wetlands and associated uplands at Kawainui Marsh. Project partners include the Castle Foundation, The Wildlife Society, Le Jardin Academy, Kailua Urban Design Task Force, and the City and County of Honolulu.

"When people at so many different levels come together in these kinds of projects, everybody wins," Norton said. "This is the kind of effort that makes it possible for us to leave a real legacy for our children and grandchildren."

National Coastal Wetlands Conservation grants are awarded to states through a competitive process. The program is funded under provisions of the 1990 Coastal Wetlands Planning, Protection and Restoration Act, with money generated from excise taxes on fishing equipment and motorboat and small engine fuels.

Including the 2006 grants, the Service has awarded more than \$165 million in grants to states and insular areas since the program began; when the 2006 projects are complete, they will have protected, restored or enhanced about 14,000 acres. A total of more than 200,000 acres will have been protected or restored since the grant program began.

For more information, contact the National Coastal Wetlands Conservation Grant Program, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, 4401 North Fairfax Drive, Arlington, VA 22203, or Division of Federal Assistance, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, 4401 North Fairfax Drive, Arlington, VA 22203, or visit the program's home page at <http://www.fws.gov/coastal/CoastalGrants/>.

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is the principal Federal agency responsible for conserving, protecting and enhancing fish, wildlife and plants and their habitats for the continuing benefit of the American people. The Service manages the 95-million-acre National Wildlife Refuge System, which encompasses 545 national wildlife refuges, thousands of small wetlands and other special management areas. It also operates 69 national fish hatcheries, 64 fishery resources offices, and 81 ecological services field stations. The agency enforces Federal wildlife laws, administers the Endangered Species Act, manages migratory bird populations, restores nationally significant fisheries, conserves and restores wildlife habitat such as wetlands, and helps foreign and Native American Tribal governments with their conservation efforts. It also oversees the Federal Assistance program, which distributes hundreds of millions of dollars in excise taxes on fishing and hunting equipment to State fish and wildlife agencies.

- FWS -